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ABSTRACT

In the cassette reading method, based on Guthrie's theory of learning (1952), which states that two stimuli occurring at the same time will be learned together, children follow the written text (using a bookmark) as they listen to the same words being spoken on tape. This booklet briefly outlines the method, which works well with children in the second, third, and fourth grades, and suggests ways of presenting the reading material and of stimulating the children's interest. The booklet concludes that most children will need no more than two years using the reading machines to produce reading scores of 100%. (JM)

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CASSETTE READING METHOD

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A Superior Method of Teaching Reading

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Hall, Buford Charles, B.A.
Teacher of Reading

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CASSETTE READING METHOD:
A SUPERIOR METHOD OF TEACHING READING

DEDICATIONS

I dedicate this book to my son, Carlos A. Hall and to my wife, Maria Isabel Hall.

I also dedicate this book to all children who have found learning to read difficult and to all teachers who would appreciate a simple, fast, and efficient method of teaching children to read.

The cover: These children are learning to read. Kenneth Bolyer is on the left, and Larry Tear is on the right.

Hall, Buford Charles, B.A.
Cassette Reading Method: A Superior Method of Teaching Reading
The Backroom Press, 118 Plateau, Box 1490, Hot Springs, Arkansas 71901. (1976)

FROM THE AUTHOR

The author, Buford C. Hall, is a teacher of reading in the Elementary School. His Degree is from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.

I soon realized that about ⅓ of the 3rd and 4th grade students each year could not read well enough to read their basal curriculum readers.

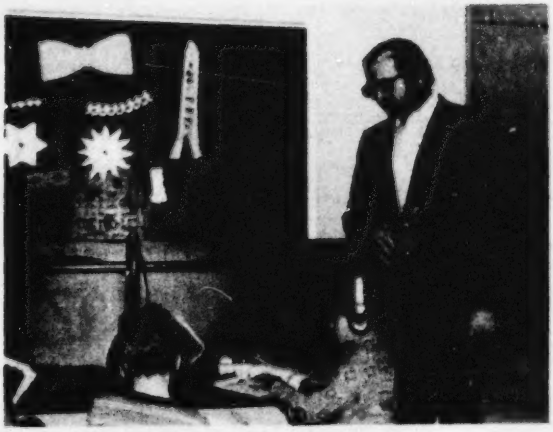
A child who cannot read 94% or better will not be able to read math problems, do the reading workbook, social studies, or even know what the spelling words are.

Many children are classified as slow learners or learning disability children, because they can't read. Of course, they can't do their lessons; they can't read. It is a fact that children who can't read need help, and they need it quickly.

Teachers will find that the Cassette Reading Method is a simple, fast, and efficient method of teaching children to read. It will teach your children to read better than any other known system or method. For example, with a class of 25 fourth graders you will find that about 24 will be reading at 90% or better by the end of the year.

Those one or two children remaining are truly special education children or learning disability children. However, they usually can be taught to read in just one more year on the machines.

The author is 44 and was born April 18, 1932 in Dewitt, Arkansas.



CASSETTE READING METHOD

This is a no-nonsense method of teaching reading to children. It is simple, fast, and efficient. It is based on one amazing fact: To learn to read, you must see the word and hear the word at the same time.

You will recognize this as Guthrie's Theory of Learning (1952) put into practical use. **Two stimuli occurring at the same time will be learned together.** The first stimuli is the written word and the second is the spoken sound of the word. Recall of one will tend to recall the other.

Others of you will recognize this as Hull's Theory of Learning (1943) put into practical use. **Things will be learned which are repeated together often enough.** Children using the Cassette Reading Method will hear about 4000 words per hour.

Each hour the children receive about 4,000 random words from Children's Literature books. In a 2 hour reading period occurring daily for 36 weeks, the child will hear about 1,440,000 words.

Instruct the children to say after you: "**To learn to read, you must see the word and hear the word, at the same time.**" Have the children say this until they have memorized it. Also have them point to an eye and then to an ear as they say it.

The children must be encouraged to keep their place with a bookmark. It is necessary to use a bookmark, because then it is easy for the teacher to tell just who is working correctly and who is not. The teacher must monitor the situation. It will be wise to occasionally go to each child and plug into his black box, and listen to see if he has his place, and to see how well he is able to keep his place.

You will find that beginning readers will do better with large lettering. They can see it better and can keep their place better.

It is better to begin this method with second graders. By the time your second grade group has had it for three years, you will find few or no fourth graders in your remedial reading class.

The Cassette Reading Method works well with 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grade children. In a typical year with 25 2nd graders sent to the reading room for one hour every other day, all could read at 90% or better in their basal readers by the end of the school year. As the year progressed, those who could read at 94% remained in their regular classroom.

In a typical year 12 of a class of 27 3rd graders were sent to the cassette reading room. By the end of the school year all were reading at 90% or better in their basal readers.

The 4th graders after a typical year, all but 2 children, could read above 90% in the 4th grade basal reader.

Each grade in the above example had not been taught reading previously with the Cassette Reading Method.

The Cassette Method was innovated as it was necessary to find a teaching method which would reach even the slow learner.

The Cassette Reading Method was found superior to Phonics. See **Phonics Vs The Cassette Reading Method**, Hall (1976).

The Phonovisual Method, which is similar to the Cassette Reading Method, was found superior to six other methods of teaching reading. See **An Evaluation of the Phonovisual Method**, (1965). Both systems read to the child. However, cassettes are far easier to use in practical use than are records.

Reading is essentially a skill which illicits automatic responses. It must be overlearned. The learning theories of Guthrie and Hull fit nicely to create the Cassette Reading Method.

It takes a good teacher to implement the Cassette Reading Method. The method is good, but it takes a good hard working teacher to make it work.

These two girls, Paula Herring on the left, and Tracy Brown on the right, are learning to read with the Cassette Reading Method.

DEFINITION OF READING

Strange as it may seem, there is some confusion as to the meaning of the word Reading. To clarify this we must define the word:

Reading is seeing a word and saying it correctly. Reading is not comprehension. Reading is not understanding the written word. Certainly, there are many children who can read 94% or better, the A level; and yet they do not understand well what they read. I have seen A readers with comprehension at the D and F level. This is not uncommon.

The determination of reading skill is done very simply. Choose a paragraph at random from the basal reader or the Children's Literature. Count 100 words and ask the child to read it. Each missed word will count off one percentage point.

Now when you wish to say how well a child can read, you can quote a percentage number and be very accurate in stating his true reading level.

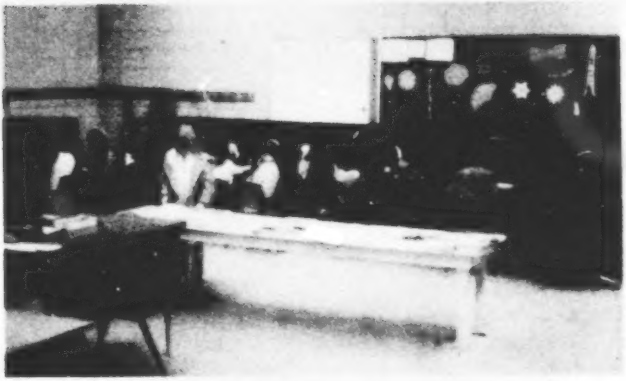
It is impractical to expect children to comprehend before they can read. However, when children can score above 94% in reading; they are ready for comprehension training.

Comprehension training should continue until they can score 83% or better on the SRA Comprehension tests.

Parker, Don H. **SRA Reading Laboratory.** 1958.

When a child is finally at the 94% reading level and at the 83% comprehension level, they are ready for the standard curriculum basal readers and workbook.

Sometimes you will find a child who has a A in comprehension, but he has yet to reach the 94% level in reading. Keep this child on the Cassette Reading Method until his reading has reached 94% or better.



TEACH THE CHILDREN TO LIKE READING

Yes, it can be done. Children can be taught or conditioned or trained to like reading.

The child must be happy while he is reading. It is as simple as that. There is a great deal of theory behind this. Guthrie (1952) would say that since the child was happy while he was reading, then the two are learned together. That is, one will tend to recall the other. A happy moment with a book will be recalled when the child picks up the book once again to read.

The problem arises for the good teacher to manage to keep the children happy while they read.

A reading party in the library with the teacher is always fun. They get books they like and read in singles or pairs. Then they tell their friends what they are reading about. This should be done when the teacher feels, about 1 hour a week.

Reading with a friend often makes children very happy. If they talk some of the book, that is fine.

Let the children have their choice of the books they can read. If it is not too hard for them or the letters too small, let them read their choice. A stimulated mind is a wonderful thing.

Always encourage taking library books home.

COMPREHENSION

Reading comprehension is not reading: it is understanding of reading. This level can be determined by many good comprehension tests. The author uses SRA booklets with the multiple choice tests at the end of a two page short story. Use only 5 multiple choice questions so that you can figure the percentage in your head. One miss is 80%, two 60%, three 40%, four 20%, and five 0%. Do not use the other questions which do not relate to the story.

Children can handle the basal reader textbook and workbook when they can score 83% or better on the comprehension tests and 94% or better on reading tests.

It is useless to give children comprehension training tests until they can read above 94%.

There is some doubt that comprehension can be taught at all. That is, can ability to understand really be taught?

There is no doubt that a child can be taught to comprehend a certain lesson, but this is really learning, not comprehension. This is far from teaching him the ability to understand. Can comprehension or the ability to understand really be taught? I don't think so.

A study by the author, Hall (1976) - **Comprehension Cannot be Taught, but Learning Can,** reveals that the ability to understand or therefore comprehension, cannot be taught. There was no significant difference between the control and the experimental group.

The experimental group was given extensive SRA comprehension training and testing. The control group was not.

The **American College Dictionary** (1950) lists comprehension as: "Understanding, capacity of the mind to grasp ideas, and ability to know."

A thorough search of the literature revealed much misunderstanding and mis-use of the word comprehension. It is usually used as a synonym of learning which is incorrect.

As a reading teacher you will have teachers come to you saying that a child can say words correctly, but he scores poorly on comprehension. You will be asked to teach the child comprehension. If the child is reading 99% to 100%, refuse to take him. The ability to understand or comprehend cannot be taught.

This book is not concerned with the teaching of comprehension. However, the SRA comprehension tests should be given regularly to your 94% and above readers, because they will learn a lot

from the material. You can easily find out just how much they have learned of the material by the test scores.

A basal reader system based on the SRA two-page story and test principle would be excellent. It wouldn't teach them comprehension (the ablity to understand), but it would teach them the material and give you a fine grading measure.

Vocabulary training takes place naturally with the Cassette Reading Method. It takes place due to reading the content of the Children's Literature.

Comprehension is "understanding; capacity of the mind to understand". Intelligence is "capacity for understanding". The American College Dictionary (1950).

Understanding of the written word will come naturally while the student is reading, according to his inherited level of intelligence, environment and age level.

THE 100 WORD TEST

Give a grade for reading and one for comprehension. Those reading below 94% will get no comprehension grade. Give comprehension training SRA tests to those children who can read at 94%.

The 100 word test is the simplist and easiest way to measure reading skill accurately. Do not choose a standardized test. Reading is random; it is not standardized. Reading is reading words at random as they appear on the printed page. Even the page is chosen at random very often. Therefore, testing must come from random reading matter for their grade level.

A good test would be to choose a paragraph at random from their basal reader. Then count out 100 words. This is the test. Each word they miss will count off one point. This will give you a percentage number which will be an accurate representation of the child's reading level.

After the pre-test, which is done the first thing at the first of the year; place your children into two groups. One group will score 94% or better. This group does not need the Cassette Reading Method. They can do the standard curriculum reading material for that grade. They should be in their home room.

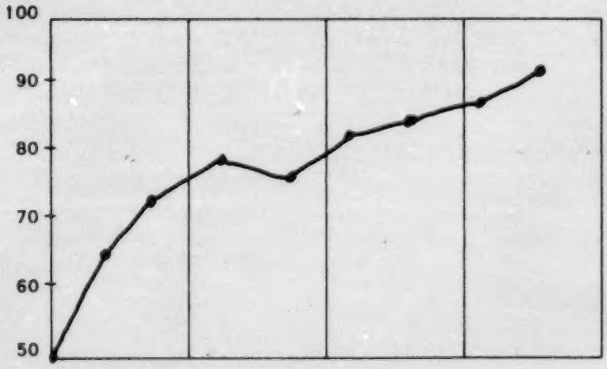
The second group will be made up of those children who score below 94% on the 100 word pre-test. These children need the Cassette Reading Method.

THE Cassette Reading Method can best be carried on in a separate room provided for this purpose. A sixty minute reading period daily will be fine.

CHART THE LEARNING CURVE EACH MONTH

It is important to chart a learning curve of each child during the school year. At the beginning test the child to see just what his beginning percent in reading is. Mark this on the chart.

Each month mark another dot on the chart. Get a package of graph paper so you will have a graph for each child. It is wise to test every two weeks and average the two tests together to obtain the monthly average. Divide the composite score by 2 to receive the average score. More tests than 2 per month are unnecessary and will disturb the reading learning situation too often and serve no useful purpose.



USE CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

The wonderful world of children's literature opens its doors with the Cassette Reading Method. The reading material should be children's literature.

The basal reading text should be used also to place many of the stories on tape. Choose only stories which you believe they will like.

Place about 50 books and tapes on a long table with their accompanying cassette tapes. The children choose which books they will read.

This all becomes very exciting for them. You will find that they will have great enthusiasm for reading children's literature.

RECORDING THE CHILDREN'S LITERATURE ON CASSETTE RECORDING TAPE

The teacher must read the stories into the Cassette Recorder at a pace the children can follow. This is about 80 to 100 words a minute.

Be sure to pause at the end of the sentence. **Also pause at the end of the line.** This pause is short, but long enough to let the child know that the end of the line has been reached.

Always record when it is very quiet. Never record when the children are present.

THE CASSETTE PLAYER

It is necessary to take each cassette tape and find the tab at the back which is removable. Remove the tab on each side to prevent children from accidentally pushing the red button on the recorder and ruining a tape. You will find it necessary to remove both tabs. When you wish to re-record, you can place paper in the hole and still record.

Teach the children to use the players. Many second graders can be taught to use the cassette players; however, the teacher will have to run the machine for some.

It is wise to tell the children not to rewind after using a tape. They are only to rewind before they use a tape.

It is more efficient to place all tapes in an orderly fashion in a box on the teacher's desk. It is best to rewind all tapes before the children arrive. Then the teacher can hand them the correct tape all ready to run.

THE EARPHONES

Earphones are a necessity. They will achieve your purpose when using the Cassette Reading Method and yet the noise level is kept down in the room. The teacher should spend all available time monitoring each child to see that he is keeping the

place with a bookmark. Occasionally it might be necessary to insist that they get busy.

The earphones will break down at times. Usually this is a wire pulled loose from the plug or an open connection between the plug and the earphone.

This can be fixed with a soldering iron. You will need solder, hook-up wire #18, and an ohm meter. The ohm meter will help you to determine just where the break is.

MECHANICAL PROBLEMS OF THE PLAYERS

It will be necessary to buy some Non-Slip. This is a liquid chemical which will cause the Cassette Player belts to operate better.

Poorly designed players will sometimes cause the tape to wrap around the large pulley near the recording head. Usually this will come loose if you will gently push play again while pulling. However, sometimes it will be necessary to take the Cassette Player apart and then take your tape loose. This does not happen often, but it does happen.

Some tapes are poorly made, and they will turn hard and not work well in the recorder. When you discover this, turn it with a Bic pen.

Should a belt need to be replaced, use about ten turns of thread. It will work very well.

AUXILIARY EARPHONE PLUGS AND BOXES

One Cassette Player will supply enough audio for many children using earphones. It may be necessary to make extra places to plug into. Small black boxes and jacks can be purchased from Radio Shack stores.

It is recommended that all connections be of the miniature size. They are stronger and work better than the standard size.

A box with 3 or 4 auxiliary miniature plugs each should be available for each Cassette Player. Then children may read together as they choose.

MOVIE STYPE PROJECTION OF WORDS

The Cassette Reading Method works equally well with the Tachistoscope. This machine projects a line at a time on a movie screen. Filmed children's stories may be projected onto a screen for reading a line at a time.

The teacher can either read the line to the children or have small groups of 3 or 4 sit together and read the lines in turn. As each child reads a line the others help him with the words he misses. This quickly becomes a group psychology learning situation. His peer group hears him read and learn. It is participated in with high interest.

The teacher may wish to make cassette tapes of certain favorite films. The teacher may wish to use a larger speaker than the one in the cassette player. It may be plugged into the same miniature phone jack as the earphone. The larger and better speaker will give the sound of a movie in progress.

It will be necessary to ask a child to push the button on the Tachistoscope to change the line of words to the next line when needed.

With the Tachistoscope it is possible to display a single line of words as long as necessary. It is a nice variation of the Cassette Reading Method. The teacher will find that children will want to read on the Tachistoscope for awhile and then finally will ask you to let him read on the Cassette Players awhile. Also the reverse sometimes happens.

You will find that the children really get turned on to reading. They get to choose the books or the films. They get to operate cassette players or the Tachistoscope. They get to read aloud or silently. They work in groups or singles of their choice. Their reading learning situation is always changing and exciting.

Tachistoscope. **Psychotechnics Inc. Glenview, Illinois. 60025**

It will be wise also to get an electronic technician to wire you a place to plug a microphone into the cassette machine so that you

can talk through the large speaker amplified. You will find it useful for reading stories to the children.

These third graders are learning to read with the Cassette Reading Method using the Tachistoscope.

OTHER METHODS

Other method of teaching reading may be used when a change of pace is needed. Variety is a wonderful thing in learning. It keeps away boredom and stimulates the child. However, bear in mind that any deviation from the Cassette Reading Method is little more than a change of pace or a short diversion. There is no other reading method as simple and efficient as the Cassette Reading Method. Other methods should not be used for periods of more than 30 minutes.

One of the favorite methods used as a "break" from the Cassette Reading Method is a 15 minute period of reading in the library. This might best be used for children who can read at 90% and above. They should also be encouraged to check out books of their choice.

Phonics books should be placed on cassette tapes. These books should be placed on the children's liteature table. They may choose to read phonics. The tapes should be made to keep the reading exciting. Leave out meaningless rules of phonics they need never learn. There are plenty of people who read 100% and yet they do not know the many complex rules of phonics.

The many complex rules of phonics are somewhat like learning a foreign language, one

which is no longer used or spoken. Do not confuse the child by trying to teach him rules he will never use.

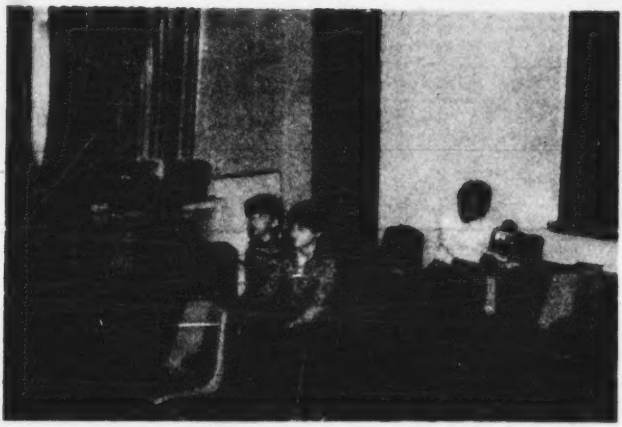
However, phonics is not all bad. Teach the child that letters and combinations of letters have sounds. New words can be broken down into parts and sounded out. Many textbooks of phonics have pages of suffixes with several prefixes that can be added. Make tapes which read these words with each prefix added. Ask the child to try to say the word before the teacher does or before his partner does. It becomes fun to beat the partner or to say it before the teacher.

Also say a word and let the child choose which prefix went with the suffix to make the word. After the child states which of three prefixes he believes is right, the teacher will tell him which is right. It soon becomes a game of reading.

A favorite diversion is to have stacks of word cards. Place these cards on a desk top. Four or five children sit around the table. The captain calls out words and the others try to find the card and place his hand on it first.

The child who touches the correct word card first gets to pick it up. This reading game is fun and is very similar to slapjack.

Another favorite diversion is to give pairs of children 15 minutes with a small electric calculator. They will be fascinated by it. This can be used as a reward for reading several books. Excitement will be high, and the reading situation will be stimulated.



Group reading with the Tachistoscope can be very exciting. Left to right: Tracy Brown, Larry Tear, Randy Alberson, and Kenneth Bolyer.

CONCLUSION

The Cassette Reading Method is by far the best method of teaching reading there is. It has been used so successfully that most slow learners learn to read in just one school year.

Other methods should also be used. However, other methods should be used very sparingly as only a break from the Cassette Method. The same teaching method constantly will become tiring.

The teacher must bear in mind that all time away from the Cassette Reading Method is very nearly time lost or simply time for a change of pace. The Cassette Reading Method is far better than any other method.

Never forget that the Cassette Method is exposing your learner to about 4,000 words an hour. No other method can do that.

Teach this method to second, third, and fourth graders. The first might even be included. Most children will need no more than two years on the reading machines to produce reading scores of 100%.

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